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Message Text

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AID-05 EB-08 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-05 OMB-01 CEA-01
COME-00 FRB-03 INR-07 XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04
SIL-01 AGRE-00 /095 W
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O R 191119Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2908
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
USMISSION GENEVA
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USOECD ALSO FOR EMBASSY

USMTN

OECD FOR SCHULTZE

E FOR COOPER

EA FOR HOLBROOKE

DEPT PASS WHITE HOUSE FOR OWEN AND ARMACOST
STR FOR STRAUSS AND WOLFF
TREASURY FOR BLUMENTHAL
COMMERCE FOR KREBS
LABOR FOR MARSHALL

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ETRD, EFIN, JA, US
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SUBJECT: RIVERS/HEGINBOTHAM TEAM INTERIM REPORT I

REF: TOKYO 17584 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: RIVERS/HEGINBOTHAM TEAM INCLUDING LANDE, FINATT AND AGATT HAS MET WITH GOJ ECONOMIC AGENCY OFFICIALS AT DIR. GEN. LEVEL IN A GROUP AND INDIVIDUALLY TO STATE DEEPENING SENSE OF

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ECONOMIC CRISIS AND THREAT OF PROTECTIONISM. REACTION TO STRONG PROPOSALS IN OUR NON-PAPER REVEALS MAJOR DIFFICULTIES ON JAPANESE SIDE BUT GROWING COMPREHENSION OF NEED FOR MAXIMUM POLITICALLY FEASIBLE ACTION. JAPANESE ARE EXAMINING OUR MANY PROPOSALS AND ARE PREPARING RESPONSE. MEETINGS WILL CONTINUE OVER WEEKEND AND ON MONDAY. END SUMMARY.

2. RIVERS/HEGINBOTHAM TEAM EFFORT EFFECTIVELY BEGAN IN ADVANCE OF FIRST MEETING WITH PRESENTATION OF "NON-PAPER" THROUGH MOFA TO ECONOMIC AGENCIES. TEXT WAS AS PROVIDED BY TELEGRAM ALTHOUGH USDEL MADE SOME MINOR CHANGES AND TYPO CORRECTIONS. TEXT AS SUBMITTED WILL BE BROUGHT TO WASHINGTON BY USDEL. NON-PAPER WAS ITSELF A HEAVY BUT EFFECTIVE BLOW. FONOFF OFFICIAL DESCRIBED IT PRIVATELY AS "SHOCK." AT LEAST ONE OFFICIAL AT FIRST FELT U.S. LIST DESIGNED TO GET GOJ REJECTION TO PROVIDE BASIS FOR JUSTIFYING RETALIATORY ACTION, BUT GRADUALLY REALIZATION DAWNED THAT LIST PROVIDES STARTING POINT FOR POSSIBLE AGREEMENT. PAPER HAD THE VALUABLE RESULT OF CONVINCING THE GOJ THAT URGENCY OF MEASURES TO CORRECT TRADE PROBLEMS IS NOW MUCH GREATER THAN IT WAS DURING SUB-CABINET MEETINGS IN TOKYO LAST SEPTEMBER. SIMULTANEOUSLY PRESS GAVE HEAVY PLAY IN TOKYO TO VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S AND STR STRAUSS' REMARKS TO KOMEITO LEADERS IN WASHINGTON THAT TRADE ISSUES WERE REACHING A "BURSTING POINT." WASHINGTON REPORTS DIRECTED SUBSTANTIAL PRESS ATTENTION TO VISIT BY DELEGATION.

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3. INITIAL MEETING ON NOV. 18 WAS CHAIRED BY DIR. GEN. MOTONO WITH REPS FROM MOFA, MOF, MITI, MAF, AND EPA. THEREAFTER MEETINGS OF 90 MINUTES OR LONGER WERE HELD AT EACH OF THE FIVE AGENCIES.

4. IN OPENING REMARKS, MOTONO EMPHASIZED THAT JAPAN WAS WELL AWARE OF ROLE IT MUST PLAY IN POST OIL SHOCK WORLD, AND TRACED STEPS JAPAN HAS TAKEN, SUCH AS BUT NOT CONFINED TO SEEKING TO FULFILL 6.7 PERCENT GROWTH TARGET. NOTING THAT U.S. SIDE WAS SEEKING TO IMPART GREAT SENSE OF URGENCY, HE SOUGHTU.S. UNDERSTANDING THAT A SENSE OF URGENCY COULD NOT BE USED TO JUSTIFY ANY AND ALL ACTIONS, NO MATTER WHAT THEIR DOMESTIC IMPLICATIONS, AND ASKED U.S. TO MAKE CLEAR THOSE ACTIONS AMONG THOSE BEING PROPOSED WHICH WOULD BE OF GREATEST VALUE FROM U.S. POINT OF VIEW. WARNING THAT A FULLY SATISFACTORY OUTCOME WAS UNLIKELY FROM THE PRESENT ROUND OF CONSULTATIONS, HEMENTIONED IN PARTICULAR THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR JAPAN TO SAY NOW WHAT ITS GROWTH AND BALANCE OF PAYMENTS OUTLOOK FOR NEXT YEAR WILL BE. HE ASSURED THE U.S. SIDE THAT JAPAN WOULD CONTINUE TO FOLLOW POLICIES OF EXPANDING DOMESTIC DEMAND AND OF DISCIPLINED EXPORTS, BUT STATED THAT JAPAN WAS NOT PREPARED TO ADOPT PLANNED

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O R 191119Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2909
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
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ECONOMY APPROACH (AS IMPLIED BY U.S. SUGGESTIONS REGARDING
EXTERNAL COMMITMENTS). HE ASKED WHETHER THE U.S. ITSELF WOULD
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BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT SPECIFIC COMMITMENT REGARDING THE COM-
POSITION OF ITS INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE. HE ALSO MADE POINT
REPEATEDLY THAT JAPAN WAS PREPARED TO TAKE SIGNIFICANT MEASURES
BUT HE HAD DOUBTS THAT THEY COULD BE MADE DRAMATIC. IT SHOULD BE
NOTED THAT THROUGHOUT MOTONO EXPRESSED FULL APPRECIATION OF
IMPORTANCE OF U.S.-JAPANESE COOPERATION AND FIRM INTENT TO
UNDERTAKE POLITICALLY FEASIBLE MEASURES.

5. RIVERS' GENERAL LINE AT OPENING "PLENARY" MEETING AT
MOFA WAS THAT WE PLACE HIGHEST PRIORITY ON A PUBLIC COMMITMENT
BY GOJ TO PURSUE A CURRENT ACCOUNT (C/A) DEFICIT AT AN EARLY
DATE, TO INCREASE IMPORTS OF MANUFACTURED AND AGRICULTURAL
PRODUCTS, AND TO RESTRAIN UNDUE PROMOTION OF EXPORTS. INCREASING
DANGER OF PROTECTIONISM IN U.S. REQUIRES DRAMATIC ACTION BY
JAPAN TO SAVE THE MTN AND MAINTAIN OPEN TRADING SYSTEM ON WHICH
JAPAN DEPENDS. HE POINTED OUT THAT IMPORT EXPANSION COULD HELP
IN LIMITING INFLATION AND THAT JAPAN SHOULD SEEK TO INCREASE REAL
GNP AT AN 8 PERCENT RATE. THESE COMMITMENTS WERE NEEDED BY
MID-DECEMBER WHEN RIVERS SAID STR STRAUSS COULD VISIT.

6. DEP. ASST. SEC. HEGINBOTHAM REINFORCED RIVERS CALL FOR A
C/A DEFICIT, OBSERVING THAT IN U.S. THERE IS NOT ONLY A
PERCEPTION OF INDUSTRY PROBLEMS SUCH AS STEEL AND COLOR TV, BUT
ALSO OF A BROAD TRADE PROBLEM WITH JAPAN WHICH INDUSTRY MEASURES
ALONE CAN NOT CORRECT. HE SAID JAPAN NEEDS TO MOVE TO A C/A
DEFICIT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IN 1978-79. MOTONO SAID IT SEEMED AS
IF JAPAN WERE BEING SINGLED OUT FOR TREATMENT NOT LIKE THAT
GIVEN ANY SURPLUS COUNTRY. IN REPLY HEGINBOTHAM SAID THAT
GERMANY'S SURPLUS IS DECLINING BUT JAPAN'S IS MUCH LARGER, IS
RISING, AND COULD BE EVEN HIGHER IN 1978.

7. PRESENTATIONS AT EACH MINISTRY OPENED IN SAME PATTERN AS IN
FIRST"PLENARY" BUT CONTINUED ALONG LINES FOCUSSED ON CONCERNS
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OF HOST AGENCY. LIST OF SOME 550 TARIFF LINE ITEMS FOR POSSIBLE
ADVANCE CUTS WAS PRESENTED AT PLENARY AND DISCUSSED AT SOME
LENGTH. LENGTH OF THE LIST SURPRISED THE JAPANESE WHO DID NOT
EXPECT TO HAVE TO CONSIDER SO MANY ITEMS AT ONCE. SUBSEQUENT
TALKS AT MITI REVEALED SURPRISE ON JAPANESE SIDE OVER PAST U.S.
EMPHASIS DURING WOLFF, COOPER, BERGSTEN VISITS ON COLOR FILM,
COMPUTERS, AND AUTOS. RIVERS SAID THREE ITEMS HAD BEEN ILLUS-
TRATIVE AND NOT INTENDED AS A COMPREHENSIVE LIST.

8. GOJ OFFICIALS STRONGLY OBJECTED TO COMMITTINGTHEMSELVES TO
ACHIEVINGTARGETS FOR C/A DEFICITS OR IMPORT INCREASES. THEY
SAID C/A PERFORMANCE DEPENDS IN PART ON FOREIGN DEVELOPMENTS
WHICH JAPAN CANNOT CONTROL. THEY ALSO OBJECTED THAT COMMITMENT
TO ACHIEVE A SPECIFIC TARGET IMPLIED A DEGREE OF CONTROL IN-
COMPATIBLE WITH A FREE MARKET ECONOMY. AT MOF, DIR. GEN DAN

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POINTED OUTTHAT U.S. FORECASTS FOR C/A DEFICIT THIS YEAR
HAVE BEEN CHANGED FROM $10-12 BILLION EARLIER THIS YEAR, TO $16-
20 BILLION, RANGE AT PRESENT. IT WAS MADE CLEAR JAPAN IS NOT

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RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT C/A DEFICIT BUT U.S. REQUEST IS UNREALISTIC
AND UNACCEPTABLE. STILL JAPN WILL REDUCE ITS C/A SURPLUS
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GRADUALLY AND IS STUDYING APPROPRIATE MEASURES. WE ACKNOWLEDGED FORECASTING DIFFICULTIES AND STRESSED NEED THAT JAPAN COMMIT PUBLICLY TO TAKE ADDITIONAL MEASURES AS NEEDED TOASSURE THAT POLICY GOAL OF DEFICIT IS REACHED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. INFORMAL SIDE DISCUSSIONS REVEAL THAT DESPITE MOUNTING DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN PRESSURES, PRIME MINISTER HIMSELF RETAINS MOST INTRACTIBLE CONVICTION THAT EXCEEDING 30 PERCENT DEFICIT IN GOJ BUDGET WOULD FATALLY UNDERMINE ANTI-INFLATION EFFORT. THUS HIS EXTREME SENSITIVITY ON NON-PAPER REFERENCE TO 8 PERCENT GROWTH TARGET.

9. MAF MEETINGS EMPHASIZED TRADE IN AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES AND 22 JAPANESE AGRICULTURAL QRS WHICH VIOLATE GATT. SOME CONFUSION AROSE BECAUSE OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "REQUEST LIST" TABLED AT MTN FOR REMOVAL OF EIGHT QRS OF PRIORITY INTEREST AND USDEL REQUEST FOR TOTAL ABOLITION. WE ATTEMPTED TO CLARIFY THAT WE SEEK TO HAVE ALL QUOTAS DROPPED ALTHOUGH SOME ARE OF GREATER TRADE INTEREST THAN OTHERS. MAF POINTED TO BRIGHT SIDE, I.E. $5.8 BILLION IN PURCHASES FROM U.S., AND SHOWED LIMITED FLEXIBILITY IN THIS MEETING ON QUOTA RESTRICTIONS. MFA IS SENDING AKIKAWA TO WASHINGTON NEXT WEEK TO EXAMINE POSSIBILITY OF PURCHASING WHEAT FOR STOCKPILING. WE NOTED PROBLEMS WITH THAT APPROACH BUT SAID HIS VISIT WOULD BE USEFUL.

10. MITI MEETING WAS IN MANY WAYS ENCOURAGING. DIR. GEN. YANO SEEMED FULLY AWARE OF NEED FOR DRAMATIC ACTION, MORE SO EVEN THAN RATHER CAUTIOUS MOFA OFFICIALS. THEY TOO WERE JOLTED BY LENGTH OF TARIFF LIST, BUT AGREED TO STUDY IT SERIOUSLY, AND SEEMED RELATIVELY RECEPTIVE TO IDEA OF OTHER HELPFUL ACTIONS. VICE MINISTER MASUDA, IN SEPARATE MEETING WITH RIVERS, AFFIRMED HIS WILLINGNESS TO MOVE AHEAD AND TO HELP PERSUADE OTHER AGENCIES TO GO ALONG, BUT CAUTIONED AGAINST PORTRAYING JAPANESE RESPONSE TO OUR PROPOSALS AS "UNSATISFACTORY" SINCE THAT MIGHT

ADD FUEL TO PROTECTIONIST FIRES IN THE U.S. USDEL MEETS WITH MITI AGAIN DURING AFTERNOON OF NOV. 19.

11. HEGINBOTHAM LED OFF EPA MEETING WITH STATEMENT THAT C/A DEFICIT OBJECTIVE AND INCREASED JAPANESE GROWTH SHOULD BE COMBINED WITH IMPORT EXPANSION WITH BENEFITS FOR JAPAN AND OTHER COUNTRIES. MIYAZAKI UNDERSTOOD VALIDITY OF THOSE REMARKS BUT, USING RECENT ECONOMIC DATA TO SUPPORT HIS POINTS, ARGUED THAT EXISTING TRENDS WERE IN RIGHT DIRECTION AND THAT 6.7 PERCENT GROWTH TARGET IS CORRECT AND GOJ HOPES IT WILL BE ACHIEVED DESPITE DIFFICULTIES CREATED BY APPRECIATION OF THE

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YEN. MIYAZAKI SAID GOJ POLICY IS TO RUN A C/A DEFICIT IN SHORT
TERM, BUT HE COULD NOT SAY WHEN THAT WOULD OCCUR IN VIEW OF
EXCHANGE RATE AND MANY OTHER VARIABLES. USDEL,
RECOGNIZING MIYAZAKI'S KEY ROLE IN ECONOMIC POLICY, STRESSED
URGENCY OF COMMITMENT, PUSHED HARD FOR A COMMITMENT FROM THE GOJ
TO A C/A DEFICIT, AND ASKED TO MEET AGAIN MONDAY IN HOPE OF
GETTING AGREEMENT ON WORDING OF COMMITMENT. MIYAZAKI RESPONDED
WITH CAUTION BUT SEEMED WILLING TO CONSIDER SERIOUSLY LANGUAGE
WHICH WOULD MEET PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC REQUIREMENTS.

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LABOR FOR MARSHALL

12. VISIT HAS BEEN GIVEN MASSIVE FRONT PAGE, PRIME TIME NEWS, AND MEDIA COVERAGE. TEAM PORTRAYED AS TOUGH AND UNYIELDING.
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JAPANESE HAVE BRIEFED SUBSTANCE OF AMERICAN PROPOSALS TO PRESS, BUT SO FAR KEPT EXISTENCE OF NON-PAPER SECRET. RIVERS/HEGINBOTHAM HELD BACKGROUNDER SATURDAY AFTERNOON WHICH OUTLINED AMERICAN POSITION. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION ON PROGRESS OF TALKS TO DATE, RIVERS SAID JAPANESE NEEDED TIME TO PREPARE DEFINITIVE RESPONSE BUT THAT SO FAR SERIOUSNESS OF SITUATION DID NOT APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN FULLY GRASPED IN JAPAN.

13. COMMENT: SO FAR GOJ REACTION HAS EMPHASIZED DIFFICULTIES JAPAN WILL HAVE IN DEVISING SATISFACTORY SOLUTION. OUTLINE OF ANY FORTHCOMING RESPONSE HAS BEEN SKIMPY AT BEST. AT SAME TIME VISIT HAS CATALIZED CONSIDERABLE BUREAUCRATIC EFFORT, QWITH MINISTRIES MOBILIZED AT PRIME MINISTERS REQUEST TO WORK THROUGH SUNDAY TO DIGEST OUR PROPOSALS AND PREPARE RESPONSE. WE EXPECT ANSWER EARLY NEXT WEEK, AND IN MEANTIME ARE SCHEDULING FURTHER MEETINGS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND KEEP THE PRESSURE ON.
MANSFIELD

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Message Attributes

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